

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-06

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 EUR-08 IO-03 INR-05 CIAE-00

DODE-00 PM-03 SP-02 NSC-05 NSCE-00 L-01 EB-03 RSC-01

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FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7887

INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY DOHA

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY MANAMA

AMEMBASSY MUSCAT

AMEMBASSY SANAA

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

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LIMDIS

BEIRUT PASS BAGHDAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, MU, SA, TC

SUBJECT:SAUDI-UAE-OMAN BORDER NEGOTIATIONS

REF: KUWAIT 3381, AUG. 12, 1974; ABU DHABI 1197, SEPT.
5, 1974; LONDON 169, JAN. 6, 1975

SUMMARY: OMANIS HAVE REJECTED SAUDI REQUEST FOR STRIP
OF TERRITORY TO THE ARABIAN SEA (CUTTING OFF OMAN FROM
PDRY) BUT OFFERED ALL DESIRED FACILITIES. OMANIS HAVE
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MADE COUNTERPROPOSAL FOR EXCHANGE OF SMALL SLICES OF

TERRITORY IN ORDER TO GAIN PUTATIVE OIL FIELD NEAR ABU DHABI BORDER. THEY ARE SHY OF ABU DHABI DESIRE TO NEGOTIATE ALL PORTIONS OF UAE BORDER WITH OMAN SINCE OTHER EMIRATES ARE INVOLVED. WE THINK THIS HAS BEEN THE HANG-UP PREVENTING CONCLUSION OF SAUDI-UAE BORDER AGREEMENT. END SUMMARY.

1. ON FEBRUARY 3 OMANI FOREIGN MINISTER QAIS ZAWAWI WAS EXPLICIT WITH US ON PROGRESS OF BORDER NEGOTIATIONS WITH SAUDIS, AND BY EXTENSION WITH ABU DHABI.

2. IN THEIR OWN BILATERAL NEGOTIATIONS, SAUDI ARABIANS AND ABU DHABIANS AGREED ON A COMMON BORDER WHICH (A) ALLOWS SAUDI CORRIDOR TO THE SEA WEST OF ABU DHABI, THUS ENDING EXISTENCE OF ABU DHABI BORDER WITH QATAR AND (B) SETS AN EASTERNMOST POINT OF REFERENCE AS MEETING POINT OF SAUDI, ABU DHABI, AND OMAN BORDERS, FROM WHICH LINE WOULD TURN NORTH TO DEMARCATO OMAN BORDER WITH ABU DHABI AND THREE OTHER ARAB EMIRATES. ACCORDING TO ZAWAWI THAT LAST PART OF BORDER COULD NOT BE DELINEATED IN SAUDI-ABU DHABI BILATERAL NEGOTIATIONS (THOUGH ACCORDING TO ABU DHABI'S 1197 SAUDIS TRIED). SAUDIS CLEARLY INDICATED THEIR READINESS TO DROP THEIR HISTORICAL CLAIM TO THE BURAIMI AREA THROUGH WHICH CURRENT (BRITISH-MADE) OMAN-UAE BORDER PASSES.

3. SAUDIS HAVE MADE PROPOSAL FOR SETTLEMENT OF THEIR ENTIRE BORDER WITH OMAN (USING THAT TRIPARTITE POINT OF REFERENCE). THE MAIN CHANGE FROM PRESENT LINES IS SAUDI DESIRE FOR A STRIP OF TERRITORY GIVING ACCESS TO THE ARABIAN SEA IN WESTERNMOST DHOFAR, WHICH WOULD CUT OFF OMAN FROM PDY.

4. OMANIS HAVE REPLIED THAT THEY CANNOT ENVISAGE CEDING SOVEREIGNTY OVER THEIR TERRITORY IN DHOFAR BUT WILL CHEERFULLY AGREE TO ANY SAUDI FACILITIES, WHETHER THESE

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INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

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AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

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BE A PIPELINE, A PORT, OR SOMETHING ELSE. FURTHERMORE, THE OMANIS HAVE MADE COUNTERPROPOSAL THAT TRIPARTITE REFERENCE POINT AGREED TO BETWEEN SAUDIS AND ABU DHABI BE MOVED FURTHER WEST AND NORTH. THIS WOULD HAVE EFFECT OF INCREASING OMANI TERRITORY IN THAT AREA TO INCLUDE A PUTATIVE OIL FIELD. OMANIS PROPOSE TO COMPENSATE SAUDIS WITH A STRIP OF TERRITORY WHICH FORMS A NATURAL EXTENSION OF THE RUB-AL-KHALI (EMPTY QUARTER) AND IS AT PRESENT SOUTH OF SAUDI-OMANI BORDER.

5. AS TO SMALL SLICE OF ABU DHABI TERRITORY THIS PROPOSAL WOULD INVOLVE, ZAWAWI SAID UAE FONMIN SUWAIDI IN-SECRET

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DICATED ABU DHABI READINESS TO BE FORTHCOMING THERE SO AS TO GET OMANI CONCURRENCE TO A DEMARCATION AGREEMENT. OMAN WOULD IN TURN BE WILLING TO OVERLOOK SMALL BORDER INCURSIONS THAT UAE HAS MADE IN BURAIMI AREA. SUWAIDI IS ANXIOUS TO CONCLUDE THE AGREEMENT, ZAWAWI SAID. OMAN WOULD LIKE THAT. HOWEVER, OMANIS HAVE DOUBTS AS TO EXTENT TO WHICH ABU DHABIANS ACTING ON BEHALF OF UAE REALLY REPRESENT THE OTHER EMIRATES THAT BORDER OMAN. ZAWAWI SAID OMAN WOULD WANT TO BE SURE ON THAT SCORE AND THOUGHT

IT MIGHT BE WISER TO WAIT A FEW YEARS TO SEE HOW UAE

UNITY DEVELOPS BEFORE CONCLUDING FINAL SEGMENT OF AGREEMENT, WITH OTHER EMIRATES THAN ABU DHABI. MEANTIME ALL COULD CONTENT THEMSELVES WITH THE OLD BORDER DATING FROM BRITISH DAYS.

6. ZAWAWI INDICATED THAT RECENT DISCUSSIONS WITH SAUDI ARABIA'S KAMAL ADHAM HERE IN LONDON HAD NOT PRODUCED SAUDI REPLY TO OMANI PROPOSAL (COMMENT: IT MAY HAVE BEEN HEAVY GOING). ZAWAWI EXPECTS TO GET MORE MOVEMENT FROM SAUDIS AFTER PRINCE FAH'D VISITS OMAN, PERHAPS IN FEBRUARY. ZAWAWI ALSO TOLD US THAT UAE AMBASSADOR HERE, MAHDI TAJIR, HAS BEEN QUITE HELPFUL IN ASSISTING UAE GOVERNMENT TO FORM A GOOD OPINION OF OMAN.

7. COMMENT: OMANI OBJECTIONS TO SAUDI-UAE AGREEMENT WHERE IT INVOLVES BORDER WITH OMAN BEAR OUT MISGIVINGS OTAIBA EXPRESSED LAST YEAR TO EMBASSY CHARGE (ABU DHABI 1197). WE SUGGEST OMANIS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR CONTINUING DELAY IN AGREEMENT'S CONCLUSION (PARA 11 ABU DHABI 174, AND LONDON REFTEL). SPIERS

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POLITICAL SETTLEMENT, BORDER INCIDENTS, BOUNDARY CLAIMS, NEGOTIATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 03 FEB 1975
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: greeneet
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975LONDON01655
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750039-0369
From: LONDON
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750278/aaaacsjf.tel
Line Count: 189
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Reference: 75 KUWAIT 3381, 75 AU12, 75 1974, 75 ABU DHABI 1197
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: greeneet
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags: ANOMALY
Review Date: 26 JUN 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <26 JUN 2003 by ShawDG>; APPROVED <03 NOV 2003 by greeneet>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: AUDI-UAE-OMAN BORDER NEGOTIATIONS
TAGS: PFOR, MU, SA, TC
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006